

THE RIGHT OF PRIVACY.

Privacy, according to legal decisions in America, has no rights that amount to anything. We cannot by injunction restrain another from invading our privacy, nor can we punish such an invasion by securing damages, as the courts have held that the sensitiveness which resents publicity is too fine a thing for this rude world. And so in this country in the present conditions of the laws we must abandon the sacred privilege of being let alone.

This is not so in France, and at present it is not the case in England. In France a newspaper or other publication may not discuss the private affairs of a private person without permission. In England the law was much as it is here until a publisher prepared to print some etchings made by the Queen and her late Consort, Prince Albert. The courts stretched a point and issued an injunction, though all the precedents were against such a remedy. In the course of time an act was passed by Parliament defining privacy and fixing penalties for its invasion.

But in America we are practically without redress. We cannot prevent publication by injunction, but afterward must prove damage—damage which can be assessed in dollars and cents. Suppose a flashy and objectionable paper should print the portrait of a private gentleman's wife or daughter.

Every refined person would concede that there had been damage; but how in the world could material damage be proved? Right there the difficulty lies, and until it can be removed the very finest flower of civilization is endangered.

Legislatures hesitate to do anything toward the relief of privacy from the invasions of too-curious papers for fear of putting an unconstitutional restraint upon the liberty of the press. But liberty is one thing and license quite another. The press is at liberty to describe, to discuss and to criticize the public acts of public men, but even they should have, if they desire, a privacy which it were license to trespass upon. The majority of men who amount to anything part with the right of privacy to a certain extent—"pro tanto," as the lawyers put it. An author, an actor, a preacher, an artist, or any one who attempts to teach the public or who challenges its criticism, abandons his right to be let alone so far as his work is concerned. But beyond that he should be protected in his privacy as by a mantle.

It is true we can defend ourselves against slander and libel, but from idle and vulgar gossip, until privacy and its rights are defined by statute laws and confirmed by decisions of the court, there is no protection whatever. The life of a savage is open at all times to the inspection of his tribe, but the greater the civilization the greater the desire for retirement and privacy, the greater the necessity to be let alone.

HAIL TO THE FOREIGNER.

Seductive Call of the "Jiji Shimpō."

The Jiji Shimpō (Tokio) of Monday has the following sweet and flute-like call to the foreigner:

"Some people (it says) doubt whether the number of foreigners who will now come to Japan will be large. We are of opinion that business men and capitalists will come here gradually, if not in a rush. The Americans, who are light-hearted and go to any part of the world will come here first, if we are

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not mistaken. We ought not to give a more favorable reception to the men of one country than to the men of another, but will welcome all and will try to afford them every possible help and convenience. The more fairly they are treated the greater number of them will come, but we believe the middle class of foreigners will be the majority. They are the people whom we call "well-to-do" and they are longing for an easy and happy life. Higher society, both in Europe and America, is showing a tendency to fast living and the desire for luxury and ease of social intercourse is growing. The middle-class people remove to foreign countries, simply to get out of the whirl of fast society. There are small settlements of Englishmen in France and Belgium and a number of Germans and Frenchmen are removing to America and other countries year after year. In America the houses of the rich are shut during the summer and the inmates pass their leisure at watering places. This is the way rich Americans spend their time, but the middle class cannot afford it and they are eager to get away. These people will come here when they know our fair country, and the small cost of living. The climate of Japan is very healthy and the country, which is called the most beautiful in the world, has not lack of fine scenery. Japan would have been invaluable if it had been situated among the European countries, but here any foreigner can build his residence at a cost which is a trifle to him. No land ownership has been granted to them so far, and this may be said to be a drawback; but they can obtain this privilege quite easily. They can pick up beautiful portions of the country, and we are sure they will eagerly come to this paradise. Here they can procure good and reliable maids very cheaply and we know this will be a great relief of Americans, who are greatly troubled by the servant difficulty. Wages for servants have risen somewhat of late but they are still next to nothing if compared with those paid in America and other countries. This possibility of procuring faithful and reliable maids alone may attract a number of them."

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